

October Board Meeting

October 9, 2013

Attendees:

Devor Barton
Lily Berticevich
Anna Spooner
Joanne Donahue
Howard Wu
Alex Stone, visitor, presenter
Jacob Struiksma
Jim McIntosh, visitor
Lydia Heard
Jeffrey Lynn
Dottie Faris
Mark Landrenau
David Goldberg
Lorena Kaplan
Dongho Chang- SDOT
Ron Scharf- SDOT
Kim Kercner, Puget Sound Regional Council
Ben Bakkenta
Ken Rogers
Kristina Yan, guest

September minutes: Approved

Public Comment:

- Jim McIntosh: Transit is very important to those who are visually impaired. Talk of 17% Transit cuts is devastating; meetings are being held this fall.
 - Mark: King County moved the upcoming meeting on the 8th to First Hill, the First Presbyterian Church.
 - Lydia: Bridging the Gap levee funding is going toward making up bus funding, but we can't continue to rely on that as a main source of funding.

Presentations:

SOUTH BALLARD CORRIDOR: Dongho Chang, SDOT

- The Burke Gilman trail=missing link
- They are especially concerned about the section on 45th N. side because there are so many bicycle riders; people get caught off guard on 14th and under Ballard bridge.
- Safety = SDOT's highest priority. Goals: 0 fatalities and 0 serious injuries by 2030. Most ambitious goals.

- Where are we:
 - 45th and Shilshole Ave. and 11th by Fred Myer (lots of bike activity)
 - Section on 45th=highest collision section in Seattle
 - Usually use police collision reports for statistics, but this doesn't capture pedestrian and bike statistics. Now, they've started to looking at fire department records.
- This missing link is under litigation: they can address safety along this corridor
- Shilshole Ave. to Leary
 - 46th St. is on an arterial street with slower speeds and lights. This is where they'd prefer walking. On 45th: high speeds.
 - 11th and Shilshole- 20mph
 - Rail line next to it: narrow space.
 - Want to make it clearer for pedestrian use. Dave helped design it. Now: squaring up and advisory bike lane (as part of Bicycle Master Plan) to direct people toward 46th. They know the issue is with railroad tracks and don't want this to become a problem.
 - The business community asked if a one-way path was a possibility, so SDOT is willing to look into it.
 - Also, Ballard Ave. as a pedestrian alternative: safer for ped crossings and squaring up 90 degree intersections for slower speeds. (=very low cost changes)
 - Under the bridge: islands in front of the piers
- Ann: lives on opposite side of Shilshole, so that is her commute. She appreciates the focus on the area because it's confusing as driver and biker. She initially thought that 45th was a good shortcut and now sees 46th is way better. She'd prefer an E bound 1-way over W bound 1-way. Improvements on bridge gears were positive and important with the squaring. Another spot: little concrete island that is confusing and dangerous.
 - SDOT says they know about that concrete island and want to address it.
- Devor: How can we document near misses? What if nobody's even using an it's so bad?
 - Dongho: Yes, some areas in Seattle are really bad for walking, i.e. Lake City Way. He feels reducing vehicle speed should be priority when it comes to survivability for cars and peds, who are the most vulnerable. Our state has one of most progressive ped/bike laws (20mph residential/business community areas) and this is a tool for us. Proposed \$100,000 for neighborhood traffic calming. We can explain that these are areas where seniors are going and don't have safe space to walk, then develop those spaces so there are ways for them to get places safely. There is data. We have one of best safe schools programs. The community says these unsafe walking areas are the areas they want to improve.
- Mark: Sometimes it's hard to get info- is it possible to get data or reports from video cameras?
 - Dongho: We have a very robust traffic study budget: cameras on corners, student interns count. Also, we try to be proactive instead of reactive; we have an engineering toolbox and want to have education for his group of WA state transportation engineers, esp. for Target Zero (state program).

23RD AVE CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS: Jamie O'Day, SDOT

- Goal for this presentation: informational
- Background:
 - Began last year, intended paving only from John to Jackson on 23rd
 - Scope grew b/c grants were obtained to allow for more improvements. The City did a complete streets assessment showing that the corridor has room for improvement
 - Recently the Transit Master Plan identified bus 48 as a primary bus route, w/ 8th highest transit ridership in King County. This bus route suffers from poor transit speed and reliability.
 - 2013 draft update: build parallel greenway, not a bike lane on 23rd as previously recommended because combining major bus traffic with a bike lane is bad.
 - Tier 1 crossing concerns, substandard sidewalks and widths (3 ft sometimes)
- Phase 3: 24th and Roanoke to 23rd and John
 - Maintain 4 lane cross-section
 - Won't be expanding sidewalk or landscape b/c not the right time
 - Jacob: Will they make sure the sidewalk is at least safe and level?
 - Kim: They will be reconstructing 75% of the sidewalk to make sure it's level, etc.
- Phase 1: E. John to Jackson
 - Proposed: 10 ft center turn lane and 12 ft lanes to allow for wider sidewalks (7-8' sidewalks and 5-6' landscaping). Also adding trolley infrastructure for bus trolleys so only have to disturb street once.
 - Parallel greenway on 21st or 22nd (separate project manager)
 - Devor: Suggest to the greenway project manager that 1 block away from the main street will be better.
 - Howard + Jamie: An open house for the greenway is being held on November 7.
 - Jamie: It's confusing that the project will be called the 23rd Ave. Greenway but not on 23rd- it will be renamed.
 - Mark: Will there be an open house for the projects on 23rd?
 - Jamie: There were open houses. Devor: and we've had presentations. The main concern from the community members was their desire to not be required to press buttons before crossing.
 - Jamie: Dongho is actually the main guy for those issues. One of the benefits of creating 3-lanes is the faster pedestrian crossing time.
- Phase 2: Jackson to Rainier on 23rd
 - Hill Street @ south end, Rainier/23rd proposed to be closed (turned into a cul-de-sac). Lots of accidents here.
 - Mark: Is this the intersection near Treehouse? Jamie: Yes, Rainier, 23rd, & Hill join at complicated place. Devor: Close to Treehouse and Burger King. So, a 6 way intersection will become a 4-way intersection. This will make a saner crossing there; it makes sense. Pedestrians can still get through if it's a cul-de-sac.

- Schedule: Phase 1 begins in about a year, 2 and 3 begin winter 2015.
- Secured \$22 million: \$14 million is grant funding, \$8 million was for phase 1 paving.
 - Still need \$19.5million- likely look for future Bridging the Gap funding.
- Lydia: It's often hard to do these projects b/c you'll have to move storm water drains and such- is that part of the cost involved here?
 - Jamie: yes, will be required part of the project
- Jeff: What are issues w/ 520 in relation to phase 3?
 - Jamie: The intent is to keep traffic flowing.
- Jamie: Not doing a full curb realignment but doing spot fixes. Calvin: waiting to secure \$ from WSDOT so they can start thinking of designs b/c until then, it's hard to say.
- Jamie: 14.5ft lanes seems too big for an urban street in Phase 3. When there's a far side bus stop it ends up being 18 ft total.
 - She hasn't talked to traffic yet to talk about restriping to consider 12' rather than 14.5', but now she will consider that suggested idea.

MONTLAKE PED/BIKE ACCESS: Calvin Chow, SDOT

- Enhancement to Montlake bridge
- Context:
 - WADOT building Montlake bridge
 - City of Seattle: interested in bike/ped mobility, transit speed. So, City asked: what can we do in terms of a new bike/ped only facility-- operational changes, structural changes...?
 - The Montlake Bridge is WADOT's facility
- There will be improvements in the area w/ the Light Rail 2016 opening, Burke Gilman trail, etc. New bike/ped facilities will be opening for the bikers/peds that go to this area.
- Findings of use: peds use E and W side same amt of time, slightly more bikes on E side than W
 - Doesn't make sense to restrict use of bikes/peds on one side of the bridge b/c of demand and difficulty of crossing Montlake. So, have to *manage* the interaction of bikers/pedestrians instead. Maybe: bikes will have to acknowledge that peds have priority. Currently they're expected yield to peds.
 - Devor: You know biking community won't be excited about that solution.
 - One of the shorter bridges: 9'10"sidewalks, not far off from 10' but things like trolley poles/bridge joints and safety gages are all constriction points, sometimes making 6'4" sidewalks (this shortened sidewalk is the real problem limiting the bridge's options for faster movt.)
 - High risk for historic preservation concerns b/c these are historic features
- New concept: new bike/ped crossings idea- adjacent to existing bridge or E. Would prefer to have a focused area for bikes and peds separately w/o excluding either. But, if a 2nd bascule bridge becomes necessary this would be tough.
- Summary: bike/ped demands anticipated to grow, especially on E side of bridge. It's impractical to impose directional restrictions. Should plan to manage interactions instead.
 - Try to widen sidewalks, but widening comes w/ limitations

- Or: an idea for new facility is in conceptual stages- \$25-40 million estimate
 - Devor: Did you consider a facility for bikers/pedestrians under the bridge?
 - Calvin: No.
- Lydia: What will be done with your findings?
 - Calvin: This is info City Council asked for. We did the study to provide it. This will probably inform some next steps if WADOT provides more money for a project related to this.

PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL: Ben Bakkenta (1st half) AND Kim Scrivener (2nd half), PSRC

- Puget Sound Regional Council is focused in the long range planning realm (30-40 year planning): Vision 2040
 - PSRC is a metropolitan planning organization, which is a federal req. for 250,000+ pop. areas. This allows the region to use federal transportation dollars. Encompasses: King, Snohomish, Kitsap, Pierce counties.
 - \$200mil/yr to cities, transit agencies, etc. PSRC helps establish priorities for the funds
 - Congestion mitigation air quality funds (fed highway \$ for lower auto travel for), service transportation projects (main bodies of funds), FTA funding
 - 82 cities and towns within the Region, huge range of demographics/needs. Boards w/ elected officials from jurisdictions, represented based on pop. 35 members now.
 - Region is growing: 36% increase in pop, 50% in jobs by 2040. (They've had accurate stats so far)
 - 2 major acts:
 - Federal Transportation Authorization: ISTEA, TEA-21, SAFETEA-LU, MAP-21.
 - Transportation Efficiency Act: historic b/c can use transportation \$ for more than just highways (pedestrians, repairs, etc)
 - Series of continuing resolutions. Newest: MAP-21 only a 2yr bill. 1yr into it now.
 - Jacob: Why only 2 yrs? Ben: b/c they could agree on it for a 2-year term. David: the federal gas tax revenues are not bringing in enough money, so have had to keep transferring \$ from general funds. The discussion now is, in part, about whether they'll keep doing that or not.
 - Growth Management Act goals: 14 goals are supposed to be addressed at the local scale. There are regional ones that address them, too. Public participation really was made a stronger requirement.
 - Our region: req'd local vision policies. Multi-county planning policies are included in Vision 2040.
 - Tried merging three kinds of planning: MPO federal transportation plans, regional economic strategy, too.
 - Vision 2040
 - Updated from Vision 2020

- Growth will be major, and there are numeric guidelines for how certain types of cities should work to accommodate certain types of growth.
 - 27 designated "regional growth centers." 6 in Seattle: S. Lake Union, First Hill/Capitol Hill, University District, Lower Queen Anne, Northgate, Central Business District. Others: downtown Redmond, downtown Bellevue, SeaTac, downtown Everett...central places where transportation can serve, often w/ better urban form (better ped form, ex)
 - Many benefits for this centers strategy
 - Elements being updated: environment, sustainability
 - Projects strategic investments: predicts \$190 billion over next 30 yrs. About \$65billion gap based on current law revenues (extending \$ they have now). So also suggests tolling differently, how to deal w/ the issue David mentioned:
 - more tolling, usage based fees as replacement for gas tax.
 - Jeff: Does it look at census data like the Times article mentioned?
Ben: Yes, this is a multimodal investment plan. About ½ of modal investments are modal, looking at changing pattern as a whole.
- Vision + transportation 2040
 - Kimberly has worked w/ Bike and Ped Boards. This plan is to better address bike/ped needs. Bikers/peds play a key role.
 - Bike and ped implementation strategy last updated: 2003. Working on an active transportation plan on 2014 as an appendix to transportation 2040 so can be updated more often
 - What is active transportation? Multimodal. Definition is evolving. Connect people of all ages/abilities- community really wanted to emphasize this, and 'public transit'
 - Have representatives of all 4 counties in their committees with many different groups represented.
 - **Invites us:** 4th Wednesday of every month from 10am-12pm. We're welcome to attend informally or formally... @PSRC offices: 911 Western Ave.
 - Active transportation plan: wants to emphasize taking transit...connectivity to transit.
 - Have been developing regional bicycle network for 1.5 yrs
 - Also addressing: How to secure funding? This has been a data-driven process. They're considering safety efforts, addressing all ages and abilities.
 - Lorena: Have you been considering socio-economic statuses as a topic to address? What about mixed housing, access...
 - Kim: We're really thinking about equity.
 - Ben: Vision 2040 is focused on equitable development. Local jurisdictions are required to take part and we support that and we comment on local plans and support those goals-- and they can't apply for funding if we don't approve. Knowing how things will impact communities, if people comfortable making their views

known on boards, etc is hard to do at regional scale. We know that our boards are especially interested in equity, though.

- Benefits of active transportation- maybe preaching to the choir...
 - Health, social, transportation, environmental, economic- important for a variety of reasons!
 - Data: need is growing and it will be important to continue to collect data.
 - David: Do you have regional w/in statewide figures?
 - Kim: Yes. We'd like to have more 24/7 counts than the volunteer counts. We want to know about how pedestrians move predictable at intersections.
 - Funding
 - What's out there? How do we help our cities/counties so they can make their policies/plans more robust? Then, they'll end up being more competitive when searching for funds.
 - Lydia: Your slides reference making recommendations to decision makers. How does this happen?
 - Kim: A PSRC board that makes decisions. In November or December we will develop a task force.
 - Ben: Our executive board develops/adopts a legislative agenda that goes to Olympia about what our priorities are.
 - Expected to receive \$220 million annually. There is a competitive project selection process every 2-3 yrs. This is regarding STP and CMAP dollars. This year funding has increased to a 10% set aside for bike/ped projects – their committee is definitely very supportive.
 - A regional trail program just happened at state level
 - Off cycle program: Jacob in on their board
 - Joanne: What kinds of things does a 10% set-aside help?
 - Ben: Sections of urban trail going north, the Sammamish trail. These types of regional trails tend to compete better than urban trails.
 - Since 1992, there is info about projects they've funded
 - Standalone projects: 12.5%. 47% of that- trails, 29 sidewalks, 7 bike lanes, 17 other. 46.9% includes non-motorized elements (and data shows increase in those elements)
 - Ad hoc meetings about safety: brainstorm about coordinating. Now that there is a framework about needs/opportunities we need education/encouragement, data/research, policy/planning, infrastructure/environment.
 - Will be meeting quarterly for at least 1 year. Maybe work on campaign flyers, lot of ideas
 - kscrivner@psrc.org: please feel free to email and let me know if we're addressing issues...
- 8:00pm
 - Jeff: Is the Ped Shed Tool available to the public?
 - Kim: UW students were involved in the project. Ped Shed: how far can you walk given infrastructure? Ex, smaller blocks, cut-throughs; how can

pedestrians cover more ground? A diamond shape is ideal from a ped shed standpoint. FTA called it a no-brainer that supporting bike/ped supports transit. Want to give data to other community groups so they can do things with it and share data with other groups, like Feet First.

- Jacob: do you look at where things are placed for safety, aside from just location?
- Kim: That's a construction environment piece. Safety litters throughout everything. Not just a focus on the sidewalk- what are facilitates like, are boards in the way...it's a more of environmental approach. She welcomes any suggestions about addressing speeds/sidewalk.
- Jeff: Doesn't get why newer suburbs have sidewalk by busy streets with light poles, etc.
- Kim: There is more space between you and high speeds.
- David: Yes, agreed. David: Speaking as the Communication Director for Transportation for America, would like to bring attention to saving the federal funding program. We've seen here how much it has benefitted projects we care about. We need to speak to our representatives.

- 8:10
- Reminder: October 19 SPAB Retreat. Joanne will host it in Belltown. Look out for Devor's email!